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JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

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JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

Adams, John Quincy, an American statesman, the son of President John Adams, and himself the sixth president of the United States, was born in the parish of North Braintree (now Quincy), in the colony of Massachusetts Bay, July 11, 1767. When eleven years old, he accompanied his father on a diplomatic journey to Paris, and at the age of fourteen became private secretary to Francis Dana, the envoy from the United States to St Petersburg. He was secretary to the commission which negotiated the treaty of peace between the colonies and the mother-country; but when, in 1785, his father received the appointment of minister to the court of St James's, Adams returned to America, and entered the junior class of Harvard College. He graduated in 1787, studied law, and was admitted to the bar in 1790. In 1794 he received from President Washington the appointment of minister resident at the Hague; was afterwards sent to the court of St James's; was nominated by Washington as minister to Portugal; and on the accession of the elder Adams to the presidency, was appointed minister to Prussia. In 1802 he was chosen state senator by the Federalists of his district, and in 1803 was elected to the United States senate from Massachusetts. Here he gradually rose into a position of influence, though often jeopardising his popularity with his own party by acting with the opposition.

In 1806 he boldly denounced in the senate the right claimed by the British government of searching and confiscating the cargoes of neutral vessels bound for countries with which the British were at war, and introduced resolutions (which were supported by the republicans) requesting the president to demand the restoration of property so confiscated. This position thoroughly alienated Adams from the Federal party, and the Massachusetts legislature expressing its disapproval of his course by prematurely electing his successor, he promptly resigned his seat in the senate. In 1809 he was appointed minister to St Petersburg by President Madison; in 1814, was chosen a member of a commission to negotiate a treaty of peace between Great Britain and the United States, and in the following year became minister at the court of St James's, where he remained until he was recalled in 1817 to assume the duties of secretary of state under President Monroe. In the latter capacity he negotiated with Spain a treaty for the acquisition of Florida by the United States, and for the settlement of the western boundary of Louisiana; and it is claimed that to him belongs the paternity of that policy which denies the right of interference by European governments in the affairs of the American continents, familiarly known as 'The Monroe Doctrine.'

On the close of Monroe's administration in 1825, Adams was elected president by the House of Representatives—no election having been made by the people. An uneventful administration followed. Failing of an election for a second term, he retired to his home at Quincy, depressed, unhappy, and poor in purse. In 1830 he was elected by the National Republican (after-

wards the Whig) party to the lower house of congress, where he became particularly noted as a promoter of the growing anti-slavery sentiments of the Northern States; was ever ready to defend the abstract right of petition, and subjected himself to severe reproaches by constantly laying before the house floods of petitions for the abolition of slavery. One of the ablest of the old school of statesmen, he was returned to each successive congress until his death, which occurred in the Speaker's room of the House of Representatives, February 23, 1848.

His *Memoirs*, comprising portions of his diary from 1795 to 1848, were edited and published by his son, Charles F. Adams, in 12 vols. See *John Quincy Adams* (American Statesmen Series), by John T. Morse (1 vol. 12mo, 1882).